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Sen. Toy announces ID theft initiative

Lansing – With the holiday shopping season at hand, Sen. Laura Toy (R-Livonia) reminds Michigan residents to closely guard their personal information to protect themselves against identity theft.

Toy is offering a free pamphlet that details how individuals can protect themselves from identity thieves. She also is sponsoring legislation currently before the Michigan Senate to make it easier for law enforcement to track and prosecute ID theft criminals and for individuals to restore their credit histories.

According to statistics from the federal government, identity theft is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the United States. Every day, thousands of Americans have information like credit card and Social Security numbers stolen to start fraudulent bank, credit card, and mobile phone accounts.

Besides this public-education effort, Toy will join Senate Republican colleagues in pushing legislation to tighten laws on identity theft and make it easier for victims to restore their credit.

“Criminals are becoming more creative in stealing from innocent citizens, and the Michigan Senate is taking steps to ensure law enforcement personnel have the legal tools to fight this growing crime,” Toy said.

Anyone wishing to obtain a copy of the pamphlet can stop by Sen. Toy’s district office at 29440 Joy Rd. in Livonia, or at her Lansing office, 520 Farnum Building.

In 2002, more than 160,000 people – 4,640 in Michigan – reported identity theft instances to the Federal Trade Commission, which tracks ID theft complaints. Victims spend close to \$1,000 and more than 100 hours, on average, to convince the right people to restore their credit as it was before the theft and misuse.

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